

STATENS SERUMINSTITUT

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Dear Josh,

Thanks for your letter of August 16. Of course the question has been discussed on many occasions.

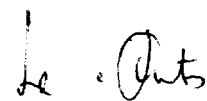
One of the reasons for not using binominal epithets for Escherichia was undoubtedly that one realized that where Salmonella serotypes run into hundreds (at that time) the Escherichia serotypes would run into 10 thousands or 100 thousands of less well-defined serotypes.

In "Salmonella Species" by E. Kelterborn, Dr. W. Junk Publishers, Den Haag, 1967, there can be found a short discussion in English on the naming problem. We include a xerox of the relevant pages. This book contains a detailed description of all serotypes up to 1967 from the historical point of view - alphabetically arranged.

As you know, one has given up naming some of the Salmonellas and in fact at a certain time in the fifties one had given up the naming completely. We are not very much involved in the Salmonella field, but as we see it the naming of Salmonellas with binominal epithets was natural in the beginning when only few types were known and then the naming went on by the law of inertia, and perhaps also because some people thought it was a pleasure to have their place immortalized this way. When the other groups, Escherichia, Citrobacter, Proteus etc. were established everybody understood that baptizing all these strains might be too confusing. It is of course true that a name is easier to remember. On the other hand, we cannot see that use of names gives more than a sham-precision to the scientific discussion.

That's all we can say in this matter as far as I can see.

Kindest regards,

  
Ida and Frits Ørskov